SOME REMARKS

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ON THE

APPARENT CIRCUMSTANCES

OF THE

WAR

IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF

OCTOBER 1795.

W. Eden Lord Auckland

"*Que faire encore une fois dans une telle nuit?*"——
"*Attendre le jour.*"

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M. DCC. XCV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

October 24th, 1795.

IT is the purpoſe of the following pages to give a general view of the circumſtances and intereſts of the French Revolution, and the French war, as they appear to me in the month of October 1795.

The attempt preſents many diſcouragements at the outſet; the objects are extenſive, numerous, and complicated; they are, as yet, too near to us to be juſtly eſtimated, and in a courſe of varying movement, which baffles every attempt to place them in any preciſe and ſettled point of view.

The mind of every man has been fatigued by long agitations amidſt theſe bewildered and unnatural ſcenes, and is brought with reluctance, pain, and loathing, to a new conſideration of them.

I ſhall, nevertheleſs, try to ſtate my ideas with candour and with plainneſs, in the order in which they offer themſelves. The ſame ideas have been ſeparately diſcuſſed by many: the taſk, which I preſcribe to myſelf, is to bring them together, and to lead them to certain concluſions.

If in the reſult, I can contribute either to a juſt appreciation of the great intereſts in queſtion, or in any degree aſſiſt others more able to form ſuch an appreciation, I ſhall think that my time and attention have been employed to good effect, both politically and morally.

§ 2. The people of France have been in a ſtate of inſurrection from the month of July, 1789, and in a ſtate of war with foreign powers from the time of their decrees

crees* of war againſt the Emperor, and their invaſion of the Auſtrian Netherlands, in April, 1792. This combined preſſure of interior and exterior troubles has been aggravated by a ſuſpenſion of commerce, a failure of manufactures, an interruption of agriculture, a great emigration, diſburſements from the public treaſure beyond any example among nations, large exportations of *ſpecies*, and a dearth of the neceſſaries of life. To theſe evils we may add the exceſſes of individuals and of factions ſtruggling for the aſcendency, and a train of miſeries reſulting from anarchy, commotions, civil war, pillage, and maſſacres with and without the colour of law.

* Premier Décret. " *Le roi de Hongrie & de Bo-*
" *hême a attenté à la ſouveraineté nationale, en déclarant*
" *vouloir ſoutenir la cauſe des princes poſſeſſionnés en Alſace,*
" *qui ont conſtamment refuſé les indemnités qui leur ont été*
" *offertes,*" &c.

Second Décret. " *L'Aſſemblée Nationale fidèle au*
" *ſerment qu'elle a fait, de n'entreprendre aucune guerre*
" *dans l'eſprit de conquête, ne prend les armes que pour le*
" *maintien de ſa liberté,*" &c.

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The military and naval exertions, far from being broken by ſuch a paroxyſm, have been aided and maintained by it. The French armies, employed in the latter part of 1793 and in 1794, are ſaid to have amounted to 800,000 men; in ſome reports of the Convention they were ſtated at 1,000,000; at this hour they cannot be eſtimated at leſs than 600,000.

It would be here unmanly not to ſpeak of their military ſucceſs in the terms which are due to it. Much of that ſucceſs may in truth be attributed to the overbearing force of numbers; but much was the reſult alſo of their own talents, activity, and perſeverance. They have ſhewn to the world, that an undiſciplined multitude, brought into the field partly through an enthuſiaſm of the popular mind, but more by the influence and urgency of famine, force, and terror, may learn, under ſelf-taught generals, to defeat the beſt diſciplined armies, headed by their ſovereigns in perſon, and conducted

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by officers of the firſt abilities and experience. I enter not into other cauſes of their ſucceſs; they would lead me into details to which hiſtory will render juſtice. The conſequences are, that Europe has been overrun. The torrent of conqueſt and deſolation is ſtill ruſhing forwards; and thoſe who direct the war profeſs not to ſuſpend their efforts, till they ſhall have dictated a pacification, which (according to their decree paſſed a few days ago) is to unite to their empire, either in poſſeſſion or in dependence, a great extenſion of territory, new barriers, many frontier places of ſtrength, a large ſea-coaſt, and ſeveral ſea-ports.

§ 3. As far as military proweſs can avail, France certainly has acquired good ground of ſelf-confidence; and in this reſpect, her pretenſions, gigantic as they are, do not at firſt ſight appear extravagant.

But a nearer approach to thoſe pretenſions will place them in a different point of view.

It may even be doubted, whether the preponderance which France held through centuries in the ſcale of European Powers will not eventually be deſtroyed by the effect of her preſent ſucceſſes; or, at leaſt, whether, ſo far as the political intereſts of Great Britain are concerned, ſhe will remain an object of as much jealouſy and alarm as ſhe was under the late monarchy.

In ſaying this I am not ſeeking to conceal our embarraſſments, or to palliate our diſappointments; nor am I inſenſible to the unmerited fate and deſolation of individuals and countries connected with us in the war. I am not diſpoſed to under-rate a calamity ſubverſive, for the preſent at leaſt, of the balance of Europe, and threatening to demoliſh a ſyſtem of civilization, under which my country enjoys a proſperity unparalleled in the hiſtory of man. But after avowing the evil, I may be permitted, in the hour of retirement and reflection, to examine the chances and means of emerging from it. If

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my ſpeculations tend to inſpire hopes beyond what the better opinion of others or future events may juſtify, it will not be from a deſire to miſlead, but from an error of judgment, ariſing from a diſpoſition not to be diſheartened by difficulties.

§ 4. Quitting therefore the vexatious ſpectacle of the conqueſts of France upon the continent, I now turn with ſome complacency to naval operations. In this branch of the war we relied almoſt entirely on ourſelves; whilſt the ſtruggle on the continent was maintained on the one hand by numerous and united armies of the ſame country, and on the other by Allies, whoſe ſuppoſed ſtrength became their weakneſs, becauſe it led them to miſcalculate their means, and to make falſe combinations of meaſures and plans. In the conduct of the allied armies there was occaſionally a want both of concert and confidence; their attention was ſometimes diſtracted by projects of advantage, foreign or adverſe to the gene-

ral cauſe; and in the moſt preſſing moments of the war, ſome of them ſhewed more ſolicitude to embarraſs each other, than to cruſh the common enemy.

It is notorious that the naval exertions of France were made on the ſame principles, which formed her armies. She ſent to ſea a force great beyond expectation. She ſacrificed her own commerce to procure the means of interrupting ours. She has ſince added to her advantages the neutrality of Spain, and the ports of Flanders and Holland, and the diſpoſal of the Dutch navy. And yet I do not ſpeak vauntingly, when I aſſert, that, though ſhe has occaſionally found means to annoy our commerce, the extent and proſperity of which oblige us to have veſſels paſſing and repaſſing in every part of the ocean, ſhe has ceaſed to alarm us as a competitor for naval dominion. Her naval failure is decided. Time and hiſtory will beſt ſhew, what proportion of that failure is to be attributed to the want of ſubordination; to the events at Toulon in 1793;

to the moſt important and eſſential victory gained by the Britiſh fleet on the 1ſt of June, 1794; to other glorious actions in the different ſeas; to the unremitted exertions of our boards of admiralty; to the conduct of our officers; and to the valour of our ſeamen. The loſſes on our part by capture amount to two ſhips of the line (one of which has been retaken), two frigates, and a few inferior veſſels; and by different accidents four Britiſh ſhips of the line have been burnt or ſunk. On the part of the enemy, the loſſes by capture and burning, and by the accidents of ſea, amount to thirty-three ſhips of the line, and near an hundred frigates and inferior veſſels of war. It appears that we have commiſſioned ſix ſhips of the line, which belonged to the enemy, and that three more are in readineſs, and to be immediately commiſſioned. Every ſhip thus brought into ſervice operates in a doubled proportion upon the comparative force of the two navies:—and, accordingly, the total relative difference in favour of England, by captures, burning, and ſinking, ſince the

commencement of the war, may be eſtimated to be about thirty-ſix ſhips of the line; to which may be added, on ſimilar principles of calculation, a farther difference of near eighty frigates. France now hardly poſſeſſes a fleet that ſhe can venture to ſend to ſea; her ſcanty ſupply of neceſſaries from other countries depends on the caſual arrivals of neutral veſſels; ſhe has abandoned her fiſheries, the old and important object of our competition; her principal ports have been blockaded during ſeveral months; and our naval ſuperiority is augmenting from day to day. I quit with reluctance this part of my ſubject, on which an Engliſh mind repoſes with pleaſure.

§ 5. In the predominancy of our navy we ſtill poſſeſs the efficient and permanent cauſe of our proſperity. It is this conſideration, which, notwithſtanding the nullity of the preſent campaign in ſome parts of the continent, and its diſaſtrous iſſue and circumſtances in other parts, places us on higher ground for treating, than that on which

which we ſtood in any period of the laſt two years. It is our naval ſtrength, which alone can give to us the means of reſtoring tranquillity to Europe. But in ſaying this, I do not mean to convey any diſſent from the occaſional expediency of continental operations in war: I even doubt, whether the danger of invaſion could have been averted, and whether the naval ſuperiority, on which I am now relying, could have been eſtabliſhed, if the attention of the enemy had not been powerfully occupied, during the firſt two years of the war, by our treaties and continental alliances, and by the brave, though unſucceſsful, exertions of our armies on the continent.

§ 6. There is another point, in which our comparative ſituation is much improved, and by which the ſucceſſes of France may ſuddenly loſe all their importance and effect. I never perſuaded myſelf either that France would ſoon arrive at the end of her reſources; or that the expences, which Great Britain was incurring, would be of no ſerious conſequence

quence to Her. I have thought, however, that this war, like ſeveral modern wars, would become at laſt a ſtruggle and queſtion of finance. Here alſo I can look with complacency to the ſituation of our enemies. With them the ſupplies of the year are not equal to the expence of a month; and the expence of a year is more than the whole amount of our national debt. Their *ſpecies*, which in 1785 was eſtimated at eighty millions ſterling, is nearly gone from the country, or is concealed. Their taxes are levied, and the exchanges of their interior trade are managed by the transfer and barter of the neceſſaries of life; a mode of exiſtence ruinous to agriculture, and leading to every deſcription of extortion and diſtreſs. The amount of the aſſignats, which have taken the place of the *ſpecies*, is now ſaid to be eighteen milliards, or ſeven hundred and twenty millions ſterling; the conſequent depreciation is in the proportion of ſeventy-five to one; and there remain no viſible reſources, but in extremes of violence no longer applicable to

the ſpirit and temper of the people. It is utterly inexplicable how a government ſo circumſtanced, and with fourteen armies to be paid, cloathed, fed, and ſupplied, can find means to exiſt twenty-four hours.

From the firſt introduction of the ſyſtem of aſſignats (founded in deſperation and iniquity) it was eaſy to foreſee the irretrievable ruin of the French finances, and the bankruptcy of their public debt, which was then ſolemnly placed under the guaranty of French honour and French good-faith. It was a natural inference, that a failure of the paper-money would produce a diſſolution of the armies. They are now maintained by a ſcanty ſupply of *ſpecies*, and by putting the phyſical reſources and produce of the country into requiſition: it is utterly impoſſible that this mode can be durable; and we have not heard that there is any other, to which it is poſſible to recur.

§ 7. It is not within my preſent plan to purſue the compariſon to a ſtatement of our own

own pecuniary means. I admit that, on our part, the drain upon the country for the expences of the war has been great: and, though the charge of continental armies, and of new levies on the continent is now much leſſened, and will, I truſt, undergo a total reduction, I do not ſuppoſe, if we continue to avoid the accumulation of unfunded debt, that the loan and taxes for the enſuing year will be much leſs than they were in the year 1795. But deploring, as I do, a courſe of events, which, before the next two months ſhall have elapſed, will have rendered indiſpenſable ſo large an addition to the permanent taxes, I nevertheleſs ſee good ground of conſolation in the reſources which have thus far enabled us to bear the preſſure. And here it is well worthy of remark, that the wiſe and vigorous ſyſtem for the gradual diſcharge of the debt, eſtabliſhed in 1786, has had, during the war, an uninterrupted and increaſing effect; and even that additions have been annually made to the fund provided for leſſening the debt, and for accelerating

rating the operation of compound intereſt. It is farther to be recollected, that the taxes impoſed to pay the intereſt of the ſums borrowed during the war, include a proviſion of one *per cent.* for the gradual liquidation of the capital. It may be attributed chiefly to theſe ſalutary meaſures, that the price of the three per cents, which was £.55 in January, 1784, a period of peace, is £.68 at this day (Oct. 24th), notwithſtanding the war, and the great additions made and making, to the capital of the debt.

§ 8. In looking forwards to the end of this conflict, it is ſome conſolation to obſerve, that all the evils, which we have hitherto ſuffered by the war, are trivial in compariſon of thoſe with which we were menaced by the French, in the viſitation of their revolutionary doctrines. The leaders of the French inſurrection had, long before the war, conceived the project of rendering the danger general, in order to extricate them-

ſelves amidſt the general confuſion. In their language, "it was expedient to ſet "fire to every corner of Europe, and to "deſtroy all eſtabliſhed governments, by an "eruption of the volcanic principle of equa-"lity." To this policy we may attribute their declarations, that "all other countries "were unhappy, ignorant, ſuperſtitious, and "enſlaved;" that "a great battle was to be "fought between errors and principles;" and that it was "the morning of reaſon dawn-"ing upon the earth." Their declamatory doctrines made ſome progreſs; and they proceeded to iſſue to all nations their ſolemn grant of univerſal fraternity, which was promulgated in all languages with great activity and expence.

§ 9. At the epoch of the declaration of war againſt theſe kingdoms and Holland, the people of the ſeveral governments of Europe, without exception, were in a dangerous ſtate of ferment. This had not

ariſen entirely from the attraction of the new principles. The firſt ſucceſſes of the French inſurrection; a natural leaning to what was then thought to be the cauſe of liberty; the revolutions in the Belgic provinces and in Poland; and the total failure of the Auſtrian and Pruſſian campaign of 1792, followed by the ſucceſsful invaſion of Brabant; had, all together, excited the admiration of ſurrounding nations.

Every arrangement had been taken in the French ports and armies to commence hoſtilities at ſea and on the continent, before it could be known in London or at the Hague that war was declared. The criſis was awful.—My imagination cannot fix bounds to the evils then impending, if the invaſion of Holland * had met with the ſame ſucceſs

* Dumouriez, in his Memoirs, and in his Letters to Pache and Miranda, affects to ſay, and others have repeated, that his ſucceſs againſt Holland was prevented by the Auſtrian victories of the 1ſt and 3d of March. Thoſe victories were glorious and important, and cer-

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ſucceſs which, through the hoſtility of the elements, and through other cauſes, it obtained two years afterwards. The great ſucceſſes of the Auſtrian, Engliſh, and Dutch forces, during the firſt ſix months of the war, and the wiſe and ſpirited meaſures adopted and purſued for the ſecurity and defence of the interior of theſe kingdoms, gave a ſalutary check to the contagion of anarchy.

§ 10. After the capture of Valenciennes the tide of war turned againſt us. But men's minds had already revolted againſt the crimes and ſanguinary character of the French revolution. Every individual, who poſſeſſed any integrity, any benevolence, or any ſenſe of religion, ſhuddered when the

tainly confirmed the ſecurity of Holland at that time. But the fact is, that before Dumouriez was ready to attempt the paſſage of the Moerdyck, the Engliſh guards were arrived, and the gun-boats were ſtationed; and from that hour (every probability of froſt being removed by the approach of the equinox) his expedition was at all events baffled.

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exceſſes of a populous and enlightened nation became ſuch as would be hardly credible, if ſaid to be committed by armed ſavages in a ſtate of intoxication and madneſs.

I turn from the recollection of thoſe exceſſes to dwell for a few moments on the impreſſion which they have left. The triumphs of a criminal people had not ſo far dazzled the world, as to ſubdue that abhorrence of crimes, which a benevolent Creator hath implanted in the human mind. The eyes of men were now opened; and the notion of liberty, raiſed in the cradle of terror, amidſt crowded camps and overflowing gaols, was conſidered as a phantom, a deception, a monſtrous dream in a delirium.

§ 11. France will long ſerve as a beacon to other nations. The cruelties, which followed the ſeizure of eccleſiaſtical property; the avowal of infidelity and atheiſm, which

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ſeemed to ſerve as a pretext for robbing the churches; the profligacy of manners, encouraged by the new code of divorces; the requiſitions againſt the farmers and ſhopkeepers; the law of the maximum; the forced loans; the compulſory enrolments; the domiciliary viſits; the judicial maſſacres from prepared liſts; were all admonitions to other countries to look with revived attachment to their own governments, in the worſt of which ſome protection was given to life, property, and the exerciſe of religion. To Engliſhmen the compariſon preſented new grounds of fair national pride; it led them to contemplate and to cheriſh the venerable ſyſtem of their own civil and eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment.

To all mankind one awful leſſon will remain in the hiſtory of the leaders of the French inſurrections, which, in the language of one of its principal leaders, is, "a recital of crimes puniſhed:" One ſet of miſcreants rapidly ſucceeded another by a ſort of he-

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reditary ſucceſſion; and every new adminiſtration murdered its predeceſſors. Thus it was that men, inveterate enemies of each other, were frequently brought together to the ſame ſcaffold, and at the ſame moment with the innocent victims of their cruelty. Many have eſcaped public execution by the reſource of ſuicide; and others (whoſe moral puniſhment is perhaps the moſt ſevere) ſtill ſurvive.

§ 12. To thoſe who meditate on the workings of the human mind, a doubt may perhaps ariſe, whether the effects, which I have deſcribed, though at preſent a ſalutary check to the dangerous ſpirit of innovation, may not hereafter prove favourable to abuſes of power, by creating a timidity in the juſt cauſe of liberty.

I will hope, however, that if the ſeaſon of peace ſhould return, the misfortunes, which have been ſuffered by many, and the peril incurred by all, may produce a general ſoftening of character, and a reviſion in

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men's minds of their ſocial ſituations and duties.—Governments will have learnt not to precipitate themſelves into embarraſſments by ſpeculative wars; Sovereigns and Princes will not forget, that ſteadineſs, moderation, and public œconomy, are the beſt ſupports of the eminence on which they ſtand; Nobles and men of property will reflect, that their large allotment of worldly advantages is for the aid and benefit of the whole; and the labouring claſſes (for ſuch there muſt be whilſt men are men) will feel, that ſober induſtry, protected by eſtabliſhed government, is ſeldom without the benefits of competence and ſecurity.

§ 13. Theſe truths ſeem to be finding their way into the boſoms of the French nation alſo; "their fraternity" (as was lately ſtated to them in a ſolemn report) "has "been the brotherhood of Cain and Abel;" and "they have organized nothing but "bankruptcy and famine."

Amidſt the diſperſion and deſtruction of their

their ſeminaries, libraries, and men of ſcience, the humanizing effects of education have been ſuſpended near ſix years; and a large claſs of the people, in the moſt intereſting time of life, has been reared in the diſſoluteneſs of camps, and in the habits of violence and rapine. Still, however, that they are wearied with their agitations, we may infer from the ready acceptance of their new conſtitution. So far as can be foreſeen, that conſtitution is the experiment of men diſpoſed to try any thing to obtain repoſe; and yet it affords ſmall hope of a permanent reſting place to the country. I admit that it contains many of the elements, which, when properly arranged, are known to form the beſt practical governments; but the parts are ſtrangely and anomalouſly combined: with one power to originate the laws; with another to accept or reject, but not to propoſe laws; and with a third power, which (though it ſeems in ſome reſpects to hold the kingly office in com-

miſſion) is neither to propoſe, nor to accept, nor to reject laws, but to be reſponſible for a fourth power, which is to be employed to execute. To this jealous ſovereignty, (of which the annual expence, including merely the ſalaries and appointments of the two councils and the executive directory, will be at leaſt a million ſterling, *) are to be added the paraphernalia of royalty without the dignity, and alſo the diſtinctions of ariſtocracy, both in the parade of dreſs and in privileges, beyond any that exiſted under the proſcribed monarchy: We may reaſonably infer, that the taſte for democracy is much changed; and yet, to crown the whole, the occaſional interference of the populace, under the name of primary aſſemblies, is added to this incoherent ſyſtem.

§ 14. It was reſerved for the eighteenth century to ſee a great and enlightened na-

* This would be the amount in ſpecies: if paid in aſſignats, it would be ſeventy-five million ſterling; excluſive of which all the other expences of civil government remain ſtill to be defrayed.

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tion, in which All, who were not ſhedding tears, were rejoicing in the ſufferings of others. "But what" (exclaimed Barrere, in adverting to one of the prepared maſſacres) "what is the preſent generation in compa-"riſon of the generations which are to "come?" It would be a waſte of words to argue with men, who, by ſuch phraſes

"Stop up th' acceſs and paſſage to remorſe,
"That no compunctious viſitings of nature
"Shake their fell purpoſe."

Still, however, to this application of the deteſtable doctrine of expedient crimes it may be anſwered, that in the eye of eternity the preſent generation is ſmall indeed; but to the faculties and duties of man it is every thing: if, by the beſt exerciſe of his powers, he can contribute to the improvement and happineſs of the generation in which he lives, he may reſt aſſured that he has no better means of promoting the improvement and happineſs of the generations which are to come.

§ 15. Every diſcuſſion reſpecting this eventful period derives, from the multiplicity and magnitude of its objects, a tone of declamation, which it is deſirable to avoid. An interruption has certainly been given to the progreſs of arts, of ſcience, and of letters; in return, ſcenes have been exhibited, which will for ages employ the painter, the moraliſt, the poet, and the hiſtorian.

§ 16. The French inſurrection, conſidered diſtinct and ſeparate from its crimes, exhibits a mixture of impiety, levity and pedantry. A pantheon for the remains of Voltaire, Rouſſeau, Mirabeau, and Marat! All religion ſuperſeded by the goddeſs Reaſon, and this new divinity exhibited to the aſſembly of the nation in the perſon of a proſtitute upon a pedeſtal! The chaunting of civic hymns by legiſlators in chorus with fiſh-women! Fraternity decreed to the public executioner! The affected uſe

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of the word "Citizen *," and the adoption of the claſſical forms of addreſs! The red caps! the civic feaſts! the objects aſſigned to the feſtivals, and to the five complementary days of the calendar! All theſe "fantaſtic tricks "before high Heaven" eſcape our indignation amidſt the ridicule which they excite. We might forgive a nation for ſuffering itſelf to be perſuaded that liberty conſiſts in ſingularities; but the ſingularities are ſo blended with atrocities, that it becomes painful on reflection to have ſmiled at them. Theſe extravagancies, nevertheleſs, have had their

* In recapitulating the pedantries, I ought not to forget the new phraſeology *(le Néologiſme de la Révolution.)* A catalogue of the new coined words would be curious: they were often characteriſtic of the ſpeakers and actors, and of the progreſs through confuſion to crimes. For example—"Nationaliſer, fayettiſer, fédéraliſer, démo-"cratiſer, démoraliſer, municipaliſer, lanterner, volca-"niſer, ſeptembriſer, guillotiner, décatholiſer, fraterniſer, "déſocialiſer, déſorganiſer, férociſer, ſansculottiſer, pan-"théoniſer: — et les ſubſtantifs; Centralité, Civiſme, "Sansculottiſme, Terroriſme, Républicaniſme, Leze-"nation, Burocratie, Démonétiſation, Baignade, No-"yade, Fuſillade:—Rolandiſte, Démocrate, Déſorgani-"ſateur, Robeſpierriſte, Ultra-révolutionaire, Terroriſte, "Septembriſeur, Sansculottiſte, &c. &c. &c."

uſe;

uſe; they have helped to eradicate from the minds of ſurrounding nations the admiration, which they were diſpoſed to feel for the French inſurrection.

§ 17. Still, however, we muſt recur to the impreſſion made by the continental ſucceſſes, to the avowed pretenſions of aggrandizement, and to the apparent power of the French armies to enforce thoſe pretenſions; a due regard muſt be given to thoſe objects, in conſidering what is next to be done, even if we ſhould perſuade ourſelves that the doctrines and details of the French revolution are beginning to be ſeen by mankind, both with abhorrence and with contempt.

It cannot be denied, that the climate of a country, its extent, its populouſneſs, and the nature of its government and uſages, may gradually form a peculiarity of morals and manners in peace, and of reſource and energy in war; but in reviewing the military atchievements of the French, I cannot trace any effect, which did not naturally reſult

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ſrom the miſmanagement of others, co-operating with motives which no longer ſubſiſt, and ſupported by means which are ceaſing to be practicable. At the ſame time it would be unjuſt to attribute to the national character of France a diſtinctive alacrity in crimes. It would be but a painful diſcuſſion, whether any other country poſſeſſing numerous inhabitants, vitiated by the corruptions of great and opulent cities, raiſed into fermentation by artful and deſperate men, and thrown abruptly from the reſtraints of abſolute monarchy to all the licentiouſneſs of anarchy, might not have fallen into ſimilar exceſſes and ſimilar calamities. I willingly believe that France is not in her natural ſtate, but in a temporary delirium. I have inſiſted on this point, becauſe the poſſibility, that a ſhort time may produce great changes, will merit attention; eſpecially if it ſhould be thought, that I lay too much ſtreſs on the neceſſity of maintaining the war till we obtain the pacification which I ſhall deſcribe.

§ 18. What turn the French inſurrection may next be expected to take; what permanent form of government will at laſt be eſtabliſhed; what relation it will hold with other nations; and to what extent the miſchief may be carried, both on the continent and elſewhere, before general tranquillity and independence can be reſtored; are problems to which the mind looks with anxiety: but the ſolution is far beyond the reach of human foreſight.

It frequently happens, that the reſult of political meaſures may be predicted by thoſe who are not engaged in them. When France took part in our American war, as the ally of a people in a ſtate of inſurrection, it was evident, notwithſtanding Mr. Necker's aſſertions to the contrary, that ſhe was incurring not only a great debt, but an increaſed deficiency of revenue, from which he afterwards ſtruggled ſo helpleſsly to recover her. When the army and navy of the monarchy were employed to fight the battles of a revolt founded on republican principles; when

when the miniſters were permitted to indulge their vanity in tampering with innovations; when the ſpirit of reform among the people was excited by writers not diſcountenanced by the court; when the princes and nobles, under the idea of reſembling Engliſhmen, wore the dreſſes of grooms, and confounded all appearances (which are always important to the reality) of rank, and of inequality of condition; and when, at the ſame time, by their profligacy, futile manners, and irreligion, they were forfeiting all claim to reſpect; it was a ſevere lot which was falling upon the good and moral part of the nation; but it was impoſſible not to "diſtinguiſh the ſigns of the "times."

In like manner, through the whole of the diſputes with the parliaments, the references to the two aſſemblies of notables, the invitation iſſued from Verſailles to every individual in France to become a political adviſer, and the entire formation and hiſtory of the conſtituent aſſembly, there was a

regular and evident progreſſion (announced and lamented by many) towards the confuſions which took place, and which, in deſpite of the new conſtitution, ſtill prevail. But the ſituation, to which that country is now brought, ſets at defiance all ſpeculation; the veſſel, now rolling, without maſt or rudder, upon the ocean of events, is too large for the ſtrength, and ſkill, and guidance of men. Whether ſome fortunate tide may bring her unbroken into port, or whether ſome new ſtorm may throw her piece-meal upon the ſhore, time can alone aſcertain.

§ 19. Certain it is, that there will be farther and great changes, and, probably, with the ſame quickneſs of tranſition with which the ſame individuals, who ſtill maintain the aſcendency, formed the ſeveral contradictory conſtitutions of 1791, 1793, and 1795. France, having paſſed from an abſolute monarchy, through the indefinable conſtitution of 1791, to a military democracy,

democracy, has now adopted a form of mixed oligarchy, which, at beſt, can only be ſtated and conſidered as an attempt or ſtep towards a better ſyſtem; and having gone round the circle, may at laſt ſettle either in a limited monarchy, or in the deſpotiſm from which ſhe ſtarted. But it is hardly poſſible that ſome ſettlement can much longer be deferred. It was ſaid a few weeks ago by one of the leaders, that "the "people are almoſt as much in want of a "government as of bread."

§ 20. It is not eaſy to aſcertain, whether the general ſpirit of the latter acts of the Convention is to be attributed to popular influence; but certainly its moderation has been conſonant to the corrected diſpoſition of the people. Crowds of priſoners iſſued from dungeons; the priſons became leſs numerous and leſs full; public executions were diſcontinued: the nation ſeemed to view theſe acts with pleaſure, and in conſideration of them, to conſent tacitly that their repreſentatives ſhould caſt the

guilt of all the precedent barbarities upon the name and memory of one individual.

§ 21. It is at leaſt within poſſibility, that France may be thrown into ſeparate States and Republics. Her extent, and the diſcordant opinions, manners, and uſages of her different provinces, afford grounds for this ſpeculation. In ſuch an event, I ſhould ſee with concern the fate of thoſe, who, in the career of laudable lives, have been driven from their property; but I have long thought, that in other reſpects the change might be compatible with general tranquillity, and with the eſtabliſhment of a peaceful and proſperous commerce among nations.

The only prediction, which may be made with confidence, is, that new ſtruggles muſt ſtill take place before the agitated country under our view can attain any practicable and ſettled government. She has dearly purchaſed her new conſtitution, and, perhaps, has not purchaſed with it any thing more than the certainty of farther troubles.

§ 22. I

§ 22. I have not purſued this topic as ſuppoſing that any form whatever of government, eventually to be adopted by France for her own interior, can now furniſh a motive for prolonging the war againſt her; or even for declining to negociate for peace, whenever the circumſtances ſhall afford that reaſonable hope of ſolidity and duration, which alone makes peace deſirable. I can watch her revolutions without ſeeking to interfere in them, farther than as they appear to affect the ſafety of that ſeparate portion of ſociety in which I have duties to perform and intereſts to preſerve: Still leſs am I laying the flattering unction to my mind, that there can exiſt in France any poſſible form of government, during which the jealouſies and pretenſions of two large and neighbouring maritime countries will not continue to ſupply frequent occaſions of diſagreement and hoſtility.

§ 23. It would be pardonable to have dwelt ſo long on the principles, temper, effects,

effects, and probable conſequences of the French inſurrection, if I had been merely carried forwards by a ſpirit of inveſtigation, and by a deſire to purſue an eventful period of hiſtory, in which a few years have given the experience of whole centuries. It is impoſſible not to feel a peculiar intereſt in the miſeries of a people, of whom our ideas were ſo different in the gay and ſplendid days of their attachment to their late monarchy; and ſurely, although there were imperfections and abuſes in that monarchy, it was conſiſtent with every improvement that can enliven and embelliſh ſociety, with much individual happineſs, and great national proſperity.

§ 24. But I have a greater and graver object in view.

I muſt, however, make one previous remark, reſpecting the actual diſpoſition of ſurrounding nations to hold in diſguſt and abhorrence the principles of the French revolution. The continuance of ſo ſalutary an impreſſion,

impreſſion, or the promotion of it (if its exiſtence ſhould be weakened or queſtioned) muſt depend entirely on the manner in which the war may be cloſed. If France cannot be prevented from cloſing it on conditions which may hold her up as having accompliſhed the ſubjugation of other countries, and a permanent aggrandizement to her own comparative weight in the general ſcale of power, it will be in the nature of man to eſtimate her principles by their final reſult, and the popular effervescence may recur with a rapidity beyond the power of language to deſcribe. This whole conſideration is deeply connected with the farther propoſitions which I ſhall now proceed to ſtate.

The inferences to be deduced from the exhauſted finances of France, from the decided inferiority of her naval ſtrength, from the, as yet, unſettled poſition of her government, and from the moderated temper of her people, are all preparatory to the following queſtion:—How far may it be conſiſtent with

with wiſdom for theſe kingdoms to ſeek or to accept any cloſe of the war, unleſs it can be accompliſhed on terms, which, on balancing the relative ſtate of power, ſhall reſtore and ſecure the ſafety and independence of Europe, and, above all, provide for the naval and commercial intereſts of the Britiſh Empire?

In diſcuſſing that queſtion, which occupies the thoughts of many, I ſhall ſay nothing of the campaign of the preſent year, nor of the farther operations which may be expected from our Allies on the continent, and from the forces which are now going to the Weſt Indies: I put ſuch diſcuſſions out of my view at preſent, and will merely remark on the object laſt adverted to, that it may contribute eſſentially to the means of cloſing the war with advantage.

I am content to argue, even on the hypotheſis that our Allies in the war are either conquered, or worn out, or withdrawn, or ſo circumſtanced, that they afford no reaſonable hope of farther aid or concurrence;

that all proſpect of ſucceſs on the eaſtern or northern frontiers of France is loſt; that our continental exertions (and expences) are or ought to be ſuſpended; and that the ſeveral European Powers will either make a forced peace, maintain an intereſted neutrality, or purſue inefficient hoſtilities, according to their neceſſities, ſpeculations, and faculties. On the other hand I aſſume, that England poſſeſſes a great naval ſuperiority. I will farther ſuppoſe (without admitting it till we ſee the iſſue of the meeting of the new legiſlature) that France has now a Government capable of maintaining the accuſtomed relations of peace and amity; and (which is more probable) that the French leaders are diſpoſed to treat for peace. In this predicament, feeling the preſſure of the public expence; feeling that the country is deſirous of peace; and conſidering the high price of the neceſſaries of life, to the general ſcarcity of which the war certainly contributes, though in a much leſs degree than is commonly ſuppoſed; knowing alſo that

there are certain bounds, beyond which our reſources cannot be forced without danger; I aſk myſelf whether it is expedient to treat for peace, and on what general outline and ſtipulations it might be expedient to conclude a peace.

§ 25. To the firſt of thoſe queſtions I anſwer, that it is the duty of thoſe who conduct the war, to treat for peace whenever negociation can tend to any probable good. The ſyſtem of the French government (whatever may become its particular form) is no longer likely to be an obſtacle to negociation; beſides, the modes are infinite by which two nations at war may ſound each other's diſpoſition without humiliation to either. The concluding is a very different conſideration; to be decided only by a due eſtimate of the conditions attainable, and of the conſequences if thoſe conditions ſhould be rejected by us.

The extent of the French claims as the price of pacification is now known. If we

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are to ſuppoſe that their leaders will adhere to what they have profeſſed in their late decrees, I cannot heſitate to ſay, that the preponderance, which our acceſſion to thoſe claims, or to any conſiderable part of them, muſt give to France, unleſs an adequate compenſation in ſome other ſhape can be ſecured to us, would be diſhonourable, and exhibit us to the preſent age and to poſterity as ſubmitting to have the law preſcribed to us by our enemy.—And what law? The ſacrifice of Powers that have been the moſt nearly connected with us; the direct or indirect annexation to France of all the ports of the continent from Dunkirk to Hamburgh; an immenſe ceſſion of territory; and, in one word, the abandonment of the independence of Europe.

And yet we ſee and know that the people thus preſcribing to us are without any eſtabliſhed conſtitution; diſtracted by factions and convulſions; in a ſtate of irretrievable bankruptcy; without commerce, except in the exportation of coin in return for pro-

viſions, ammunition, and naval ſtores; with their principal ports blockaded; and without a fleet that can venture to face one of our detached ſquadrons. Our proſpects, if we have reſources and firmneſs, are eſſentially better than they were twelve months ago; and the diſadvantages, if we give way, will be certain, immediate, and boundleſs.

It is true, that by giving way we might have ſome of the benefits of a temporary peace. The exhauſted ſtate of France might not permit her to avail herſelf immediately of her new advantages: but the evident precarioufneſs of our poſition would be ſuch, that we muſt continue to maintain the preparations and expences of war. Unhappily it is the incorrigible policy of neighbouring ſtates to lower and diſtreſs each other; and it is impoſſible to convince mankind that their proſperity is beſt promoted and ſecured by the proſperity of all around them. When, however, a pacification takes place between two ſettled governments, an exhauſting conteſt may be followed by an interval of

unequivocal tranquillity; and this has often been the caſe between England and France, though the intervals have been ſhort: but in the inſtance which I have hypothetically deſcribed, no ſuch interval could be expected.

§ 26. On the whole view of our reſpective ſituations, and after making to France a full allowance for all her continental advantages, and conſidering at the ſame time our acquiſitions and proſpects, and the comparative ſtate of reſources, we are entitled to require, that the French armies ſhall be recalled within their old boundaries; that Europe, in the general effect of arrangements, ſhall be replaced as nearly as may be on the ſame balance as before the war; and particularly with reſpect to the naval and commercial intereſts of theſe kingdoms, that France ſhall not have obtained, in the reſult, any new means of preponderance. In order to arrive at ſuch an adjuſtment, and particularly in the eventual diſcuſſions relative to poſſeſſions ſeparated from the continent

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of Europe, much muſt depend on explanation, and on reaſons of mutual and relative convenience.

§ 27. All the advantages of war are at preſent with England, conſidered as an inſular naval power, and ſeparated as ſhe now ſtands from the reſt of Europe; ſeparated not by any fault of her's, but by the fate of war, and by the fault of others.

As the war is at preſent circumſtanced, its expence to us may be greatly contracted: England may gain much, and riſks little; ſhe has the proſpect of ruining ſtill farther the reduced commerce and naval power of her rival.

But if the other countries, which have been overwhelmed by the torrent from which we have eſcaped, were to be left entirely to their fate, and if all the conſiderations of honour and territory were out of the queſtion, it might ſtill be doubted how far Great Britain could hope to ſtand alone as a rich and proſperous nation.

§ 28. It

§ 28. It is not eaſy to draw inferences from the real or ſuppoſed intereſts of France; all her activity has long tended to her own miſery, and to the miſery and alarm of other ſtates. At the ſame time I cannot ſhut my eyes againſt this glaring truth, that the want of indiſpenſable articles of ſubſiſtence and of money, and the whole preſſure of her interior circumſtances, may ſoon make a return to peace not only deſirable, but neceſſary to her.

If the French leaders are ſincere in trying to ſettle a conſtitution upon principles of mixed democracy and ariſtocracy, they cannot be ignorant that a large ſtanding army is incompatible with ſuch a conſtitution; and they well know, that the propoſed aggrandizement can only be maintained by a large ſtanding army. The experience of ages has ſhewn, that large armies, which always form a ſort of ſeparate ſtate, yield a precarious obedience to popular authorities. How far the new conſtitution is maintainable either with or without

out a large army, is another conſideration which at preſent I ſhall put aſide. It was the eſtabliſhed army which deſtroyed the monarchy; it has ſince been employed to overawe the democracy, and, perhaps, will at laſt prove fatal to the whole viſionary ſpeculation of an indiviſible republic of thirty millions of inhabitants, extending from the Lower Meuſe to the Pyrenees, and from the Rhine to the Atlantic.

§ 29. It cannot be unknown to France, that any ceſſion of the conqueſts in queſtion muſt be extorted by a ſevere compulſion; and that if any Powers have, during the war, given way to her claims, it has been on the ſpur of a real or ſuppoſed neceſſity, or from ſome motive leſs calculated to inſpire confidence. It may be an immorality in politics, but national ceſſions of importance are never made without a ſecret hope that ſome occaſion may arrive for wreſting them back again.

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The French anſwer to theſe reaſonings, that nature has pointed out the Alps, and the courſe of the Rhine and of the Lower Meuſe, as the eaſtern and northern boundaries of the French empire: if by nature is meant Providence, (or, according to the laſt invocation adopted by the Convention, "The "Genius which preſides over France,") there is neither religion, nor ſenſe, nor modeſty, nor morality in ſuch a pretenſion; it might with equal propriety be ſaid, that nature has pointed out the Baltic and the borders of Siberia.

I will not make ſo harſh an inſinuation, as that all the pacifications hitherto concluded by the different Powers, which were engaged in the war, are falſe and hollow; but any man who knows even the ſuperficial intereſts of ſtates, and who looks at the ceſſions of Maeſtricht, of Breda, of Fluſhing, of Cleves, of Rheinſberg, of Manheim, and of the Spaniſh moiety of St. Domingo, knows well that ſuch ceſſions are either to be compenſated by the effect of

ſecret articles, or that they will be reſumed whenever the reſumption becomes practicable.

§ 30. It is evident, that ſome of the conqueſts of France, under the union which ſhe propoſes, would be ſources to her, not of wealth, but of expence. It is in moſt caſes improvident to appropriate what cannot be retained without an inceſſant exertion. Countries ſpeaking a different language, maintaining different ſentiments in reſpect to religion, attached to different cuſtoms, and influenced by jarring intereſts, may be united under one government by force: but it will be an unſure ſubjection. It might even be doubted, whether the Poliſh partitions will not ultimately recoil on the great Powers concerned in them, and prove that they are as irreconcilable to political wiſdom as they are to morality.

Will it be anſwered, that if theſe poſitions are true, they prove only that we ought not

to object to France retaining her conqueſts, becauſe the conquered countries will embarraſs her, and probably riſe againſt her? my reply is, that tho' it may be unwiſe on the part of our enemy to contend deſperately for an equivocal advantage; on the other hand we ought not, in the poſition in which we are, to leave even doubtful a ſpeculative aggrandiſement of ſuch extent; and to wait in an imperfect and expenſive ſtate of peace for caſual advantages in the exploſion of new troubles.

§ 31. In the concluſions to which I am tending, I aſſume that France is not to remain in a ſtate of anarchy. If ſhe can obtain a practicable conſtitution, even for a limited period of time, ſhe will be in a condition to re-eſtabliſh the accuſtomed relations of peace and amity; ſhe will at the ſame time acquire an intereſt in thoſe relations far beyond the importance of coſtly and offenſive conqueſts. It is incumbent on her to advert to the repair of her fi-

nances, and to the preſſure of thoſe milliards of aſſignats, "which" (in the words of one of her committees) "have left nothing in the "country but miſery and paper." What is to become of thoſe milliards, a few months more muſt decide. Some other means muſt be adopted. We may wait with deciſive advantage to learn what thoſe means may be, if in the interval we cannot attain juſt and honourable terms of pacification.

It is farther indiſpenſable for France to advert to the re-eſtabliſhment of her agriculture, manufactures, and commerce; I may add, to repair her population; for I ſhould not exaggerate if I were to aſſert that ſhe has loſt at leaſt three millions of inhabitants by the effects of the inſurrection and the war.

Above all, ſhe will find in peace the only hope of emerging from that ſcarcity of ſuſtenance, which (from whatever cauſe derived) keeps all her populous towns under the preſſure or menace of a famine.

If the war continues, the dearth will extend itſelf even to the productive countries of

of the Palatinate, of the Auſtrian Netherlands, and alſo to Holland. We know that though Amſterdam was, by the effect of her poſition, the greateſt corn market in Europe, the Dutch provinces did not produce a ſufficiency even for their own conſumption; their intercourſe with the Baltic, during the whole of this year, has been interrupted by the war, and will now be ſuſpended by the winter.

§ 32. The conſideration laſt alluded to is certainly become of ſerious moment to this kingdom alſo. It has been ſaid, and the opinion goes forth, that the ſcarcity and high price of all the neceſſaries of life are in ſome meaſure cauſed by the war. Subject to certain explanations, this aſſertion may be true with reſpect both to Great Britain and to all Europe. With reſpect however to Great Britain, it is to be remarked that large bodies of our infantry and cavalry have, during a ſpace of more than two years, been maintained upon the continent, and in a conſiderable degree by the produce of the continent;

tinent; nor muſt we forget the aid derived from the numerous cargoes of proviſions which have been ſeized in their paſſage to the French ports. In a general view, the dilapidations and waſte of war are certainly great. The conſumption made by men aſſembled in armies and in fleets is much more than the conſumption occaſioned by ſimilar numbers in peaceful occupations. The waſte which happens in great ſtores and magazines, and in ſhips of war and tranſports, the interruptions given to agriculture, the ravage and deſtruction of crops by the march and maintenance of large bodies of cavalry, are all in ſome degree operative cauſes of ſcarcity: but we are not to infer that thoſe cauſes would be removed by a pacification. Unleſs the conditions of that pacification were ſuch as to eſtabliſh a real tranquillity and confidence among mankind, the evils reſulting from military preparations, and naval equipments would be prolonged; and ſo far as this kingdom is ſeparately affected by thoſe evils, they would be increaſed by the

the facility opened to the hoſtile ports of Europe to receive cargoes, the importation of which may be directed to the aid of theſe kingdoms and their dependencies whilſt the war continues.

In truth, a principal cauſe of the preſent ſcarcity of bread-corn in Europe is to be found in the extraordinary and frequent recurrence of bad ſeaſons in the laſt eight years: and though the preſent ſeaſon has given an abundant produce of ſome kinds of grain, and of other articles of nouriſhment, and ſuch as will remove all danger of famine, I am apprehenſive, from the beſt enquiries and obſervation in my power, that the crops of wheat, collectively taken, will not amount to what is called by the farmers a medium crop.

It is well known, and has been aſcertained, that, " with the exception of barley " only, this country, which in former times " produced more grain than was neceſſary " for its inhabitants, has, during the laſt " twenty-five years, been under the neceſ-

" ſity

" ſity of depending on the produce of fo-
" reign countries for a part of its ſupply."
There is reaſon alſo to believe, " that, in or-
" dinary years, the produce of corn in Eu-
" rope is not more than equal to the con-
" ſumption of its inhabitants." When, therefore, wars and commotions, and their waſteful conſequences, prevail; when the ſeaſons are bad; and farther, when the European competition for ſupplies from the harveſts of North America becomes ſuch as greatly to raiſe the prices, and even to create a demand beyond what thoſe harveſts can furniſh; we cannot be ſurpriſed at the difficulty which has taken place. It is juſt matter of regret, and a perilous reſponſibility; whenever the executive government of a country feels itſelf obliged to undertake the details of procuring food for the people, and to ſuperſede the merchants, whoſe energy, and competition, and capitals, are, in general caſes, the beſt and ſureſt vehicles of ſupply; but this interference of government was, perhaps, unavoidable in the

 preſent

preſent inſtance, when the neceſſities of France had raiſed the prices in the diſtant markets beyond what the agents of the merchants could venture to give; and it ſeems now to be indiſpenſable, as any ſudden revulſion in the actual channel of ſupply from foreign ports might operate as an entire interruption for many months.

The prices might be lowered, and the danger of meeting the next harveſt with empty granaries might be averted, if the people could be induced for a limited period to uſe with the wheat a certain proportion of the other kinds of grain. This, however, is very difficult. In the mean time, I have not a doubt that the meaſures which have been taken, have materially contributed to leſſen the danger and preſſure of the greateſt calamity that can fall upon nations. I ſhall not enter farther into a ſubject which muſt ſoon come under the conſideration of parliament: it is ſufficient for my purpoſe to repeat, that the ſcarcity of ſubſiſtence is a motive which ought to operate forcibly

with France towards producing peace; and that certainly it does not affect theſe kingdoms in the ſame point of view, nor in the ſame extent.

§ 33. In looking to the objects of preliminary negociation, the attention is called to the diſtant ſcenes in the Weſt-Indies, and to the manner in which thoſe iſlands ſhould hereafter be governed.

In the diſaſtrous and baneful character of this war, it has been the policy of the French leaders to "generalize" (as they termed it) confuſions among mankind, and to ſet afloat every country which they could not otherwiſe reduce or retain. This infernal principle has governed the whole of their meaſures relative to the Iſlands. They began by extending their citizenſhip and fraternity to the people of colour; they next proclaimed a total abolition of ſlavery, abruptly, and without providing againſt the convulſions and general deſtruction of life and property, which ſo ſudden a change was certain

certain to create; they have ſince proceeded to arm the negro inſurgents in a maſs; and this was called "the ſimple operation of "purifying the colonial ſyſtem of the French "iſlands, for the purpoſe of accompliſhing "the deſtruction of all the Britiſh co-"lonies."

I do not mean to enter into certain queſtions which this recital ſuggeſts. In the opinion of ſome, the Weſt India iſlands are the regions of injuſtice, cruelty, and mortality; the grave of Europeans, and the hell of Africans: in the opinion of others, there exiſts neither a general unwholeſomeneſs of the climate, nor cruelty in the condition and treatment of the ſlaves: whatever may be the truth in theſe oppoſite aſſertions, it muſt be ſubmitted to the impreſſion of time and of events.

So long, however, as we retain the valuable poſſeſſions alluded to, and in the ſyſtem under which they are become an eſſential part of our proſperity, every conſideration of regard to our commerce, of juſtice to nume-

rous and reſpectable proprietors, of protection to the planters, and of humanity to the inhabitants and to the ſlaves themſelves, ſhould induce us to provide for their permanent tranquillity. With that view it is eſſential that the ſeveral Powers of Europe ſhould adopt ſome analogy in the interior ſyſtems of the ſeveral iſlands which they may reſpectively retain on cloſing the war: unleſs this can be accompliſhed; or unleſs we can acquire, keep, and reſettle the iſlands, which the French principles have ſubverted and thrown into confuſion; the fermentations to be communicated between the neighbouring colonies will be great, the diſagreements will be inceſſant, and cauſes even of national quarrels will ariſe from day to day.

§ 34. There are certain other points obviouſly important to be adverted to in any pacification; but I abſtain from them as they are not of a nature to form inſurmountable obſtacles to peace, if the greater difficulties

difficulties to which I have alluded can be removed.

§ 35. There is nothing in theſe remarks, which can be juſtly ſubject to the invidious charge of recommending and promoting war: I wiſh the bleſſings of peace to be as univerſally ſhared as the air which we breath; but I know that both their reality and their permanence muſt depend on cloſing the war by conditions very different from thoſe which are deſcribed in the French decrees of the 30th September.

§ 36. We have incurred the chief expences and inconveniences of war; we have compleated arrangements of force, which, by the nature of our commerce and conſtitution, can never be attained without great delay and difficulty; our military eſtabliſhment is high and reſpectable; our navy is carried to an improvement and pre-eminence in ſtrength and ſkill, of which there is no example in our hiſtory; we

have prepared, and are ſending to ſea an expedition, from which it is reaſonable to expect important effects:—thus circumſtanced it is ſurely wiſer to proſecute the war, than to cloſe it on conditions which would oblige us, either to continue the expence of war, or to expoſe ourſelves to a ſudden return of dangers and calamities, with the diſadvantage of being unprepared for them. Let us have a peace, and not a temporary and ſhort ſuſpenſion of war; let us have a peace, ſuch as may make it conſiſtent with prudence to diſarm, and ſuch as may afford a good ground of ſocial ſecurity; let it maintain the general balance of power among independent ſtates; let it exhibit to us France herſelf with a government (be it of what deſcription it may) conſiſtent, if poſſible, with her own quiet and proſperity, but at any rate conſiſtent with the ſafety of other countries.

§ 37. It may be ſaid, that the rigid principles which France profeſſes will not permit

mit her to recede from the extended line of boundaries ſo recently decreed by her Convention after a ſolemn diſcuſſion. I will not attempt to conjecture the motives of ſo ſtrange a meaſure; but I know that it cannot have been more ſolemn than the repeated oaths and decrees of the conſtituent and legiſlative aſſemblies, never to make conqueſts. We have ſeen, in numerous inſtances, that the decrees of the Convention are not irrevocable; it is unneceſſary to carry the recollection farther back than to the treaty with the Royaliſts and Vendeans, which promiſed to them a large indemnity, and other conditions applicable only to independent Powers; and all this after repeated decrees never to treat with them, but to exterminate them.

§ 38. When we look forwards to the eventual termination of the war, humanity and equity ſuggeſt a wiſh that, whatever may be the modifications of territory and dominion,

the principles of the *ſtatus quo ante bellum* may, by the returning juſtice and generoſity of France be extended to individuals and to families, who, in the courſe of theſe troubles, have quitted their country; but in ſtating this, I do not perſuade myſelf, that ſuch a meaſure would furniſh, for any long period, new and efficient links of friendſhip on the part of France towards England.

§ 39. It is the nature and fate of moſt conteſts, that, though the provocations are multiplied by the events which take place, the paſſions and ſenſe of reſentment are lowered by the lapſe of time; and thus every war has its period, at which both parties begin to ſigh for peace. That moment is perhaps approaching; but the difficulty of adjuſting a pacification is at preſent very different from what it was in former wars. We muſt meet the difficulty; and in the mean time we muſt moderate the inconſiderate eagerneſs of thoſe, who, having

ing reprobated the war from the firſt, without regard to its neceſſity, now call for an immediate peace, without regard to the attainable conditions or conſequences: on the other hand, we muſt not be hurried forward by the doctrines of thoſe who think it eſſential to reſtore the French monarchy. We muſt promote that ſort of ſpirit, which is equally diſtant from an undue impatience for peace, and from an obſtinate perſeverance in pretenſions not to be maintained.

§ 40. It is a weak argument, but it will be ſaid, that we ought to make peace, becauſe ſeveral Powers of the late coalition have made it, and becauſe others may, perhaps, be expected to withdraw themſelves in like manner from the war, and upon grounds and ſtipulations, which abandon and renounce all the objects of our conteſt. It often happens that theſe great coalitions, even when formed and ſupported by the moſt honourable ſenſe of public expediency, fail to produce, in counſel or in action, all the effect that was ex-

pected from them. And with reſpect to the Powers alluded to, I muſt repeat, that their diſpoſitions and views are not to be inferred from the treaties which they have ſigned: ſome of thoſe treaties contain the ſeeds of future hoſtilities; others of them imply nothing more than a truce, or temporary repoſe from war: at the utmoſt, they are the partial pacifications of ſeparate princes, and in no degree embrace thoſe principles of general policy; to which it is eſſential for us to advert, if we mean to reſtore peace, or even the ſemblance of peace, to Europe.

§ 41. I ſee with deep concern the ravages which Europe has ſuffered, and the dangers which ſtill prevail; there is, however, nothing radically diſcouraging in our poſition; if there were, a want of firmneſs would tend to make that poſition worſe than it is. The whole cloſes in this ſingle point; "the expediency of bearing and riſking "ſomething more for the hope, proſpect, "and eſſential purpoſe of reſtoring general "peace on ſecure and permanent grounds."

I have attempted to argue, that ſuch a cloſe of the war is for the advantage even of France; but if it were not, I contend that it is better for her to make peace in the manner deſcribed, than to continue the war. If, however, ſhe ſhould not accede to either of theſe opinions, I inſiſt that it is incumbent on this country, and eſſential to her ſafety, and perhaps to her exiſtence, to maintain the ſtruggle. I conceive that ſhe may maintain it with a diminiſhed expence, with little hazard or detriment, and with a proſpect, at no diſtant period, of reſulting and compenſating advantages. In this perſuaſion, and in the confidence that we have the fortitude and the means to encounter the difficulties which ſurround us, I feel a pride and ſatisfaction in thinking, that England, by maintaining, with firmneſs, principles of ſound policy, will ſtand ſucceſsfully the bulwark of nations, of ſocial order, of rational liberty, and of religion.

§ 42. The rapidity of theſe remarks and inferences may have led me to uſe expreſ-

ſions,

ſions, which on reviſion I may wiſh to modify and correct; I may alſo have fallen into repetitions amidſt the complicated and recurring objects of ſuch an enquiry; I truſt, however, that the impreſſion of what I have urged will be taken from the whole, and not from detached paſſages.

It is poſſible that ſome unforeſeen viciſſitude may overſet the entire fabric of my ſpeculations; or even that, in the eventful courſe of the French agitations, the whole conſideration may be varied whilſt I am writing theſe pages. The riſe or fall of an individual will alone ſometimes change all the views and principles of political negociations and of ſtates. Still, however, ſuch of my poſitions as are founded in truth will remain unſhaken, and will be more or leſs applicable to the new objects of policy, expediency, or neceſſity, which may preſent themſelves. In the mean time it is better to reaſon from what exiſts, than from endleſs conjectures as to what may happen.

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